

# EXCELLENT INFLUENCE



**29  
NOVEMBER  
2020**

ED.LXLIII.11.2020

*Bethany International Church*  
THE HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS

## FOUNDING PASTOR

Rev Niko Njotoraharjo

## SENIOR PASTOR

Ps Djohan Handojo

## PASTOR

Ps Daniel Prajogo

## Associate Pastor

Ps Unggul Santika  
Ps Iwan Adinugroho

## Next Generation Pastor

Ps Rudy Nurtanaya

## Pastoral Care

Ps Lily Karto

## Prophetic, Praise & Worship Pastor

Ps Hemah Demak Panjaitan  
Ps Suzana Tahir

## Teaching Pastor

Ps Daniel Hardjosuwito

## Mission & Evangelism Pastor

Ps Gideon Gunawan

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## Foreword

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It's been a tough period for some, if not all of us. A 15-week lockdown has undoubtedly impacted our hearts and minds, even maybe our souls. We do not want to deny that. When I was thinking about this month's topic (excellent influence), it seems extremely hard for us to be an excellent influence for others. Some of us are drowning. We are struggling to cope with our baggage, let alone being an excellent influence for others.

Nevertheless, I was reminded of Jesus' prayer to Simon Peter, who responded with boasting about his faithfulness (Luke 22:31-32). Still in the same chapter, only a few verses away, we know that he denied Jesus three times. We could not imagine the pain and the hardship he went through. But God kept His promise, He took hold of his faith. The rest is history, we all know that Peter became one of the most influential figures in early church history.

Luke 22:31-32

*"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."*

What's interesting in Jesus' prayer is not only that He gives assurance of our faith, but He also enables us to strengthen our brothers. So dear brothers and sisters, God is able to use us to be an excellent influence, even through our failures. We will not become like Peter, but we can learn that it is through our weaknesses that God's power is made perfect. And when we are restored by His Spirit, let us encourage our brothers, serve one another, be the salt and the light, and live out our identity in Christ.

In this November edition, we will cover a range of different topics during the five weeks span. We will discuss how students should face the exam period, how lockdown has changed (some of) us, and how Christ enables us to have an excellent influence on our surroundings. And finally, we will close our November edition with hopeful anticipation towards the celebration of the birth of our Saviour, Christ Jesus.

Our hope is that you may be encouraged during this tough period, especially if you are a student or if you are experiencing hardship. We want to encourage you to consider what Christ has done for you, and believe His grace and power that is available to us as His children.

# HELLO *new comers!*

Welcome to Bethany International Church Melbourne.  
So glad that you are here with us. We want to help make your  
first experience at BIC Melbourne a great one!



## GET CONNECTED

Christian journey shouldn't be alone because it is a community project. Join our Community of Love (COOL) every Friday 7PM!

## LET US CONTACT YOU



Lastly, please enjoy a cup of coffee on us! 



# COOL LIST



## MAIN

Canaan	Kezia, Freddie
Ephratah	Steven, Henry
Berea - Bethesda	Romy
Bethlehem	Felix, Fransisca
Jordan	Sony, Wilfred
Horeb	Ferry, Febria
Bethany	Paulus, Erina
Bethel	Christy, Elvina
Cana	Bobby
Philadelphia - Pniel	Dwi, Vero
Moriah	Elve, Calista
Ephraim	Kevin L, Sonia
Ekklesia	Edo, Ica
Emmaus	Fabian, Priska
Galilee	Kevin Y, Corine
Gennesaret	Reinetta, Albert
Gilgal - Carmel	Erika, Mike
Hebron - Philippi	Yoseph, Rian
Zion	Monica, Raymond
Eden	Jennifer

## FAMILY

Antioch	Andy, Iwan
Tiberias	Andre, Albert
Gethsemane	Michael, Rudy
Jerusalem	Hestu
Mt Hermon	Lily, Unggul
Phillipi	Hariyanto, Ivan
Shekinah	Alice
Tabernacle	Sandi
Westal	Michael

## 180

Macedonia	Eric, Alicia
Shiloh	Daniel, Clarissa

## NEXT GEN

Judea	Valentina, Sylvio
Judah	Aldo, Kezia M.
Israel	Catherine, Jerry
Jeremiah	Sinta, Kevin W.
Heaven	Pauline



# Preparing our hearts for Christmas

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BY KEVIN JINGGA



Christmas is just around the corner. Usually, at this time we are busy preparing for the hype and celebration for this (perhaps, most awaited) festive season. Many of us are actually busy during this period, but for some of us, we are not as busy as the previous years. It is a strange year, indeed. But I think, this year, 2020, provides us a precious (and maybe, rare) opportunity to ponder even deeper about what is the true meaning of Christmas.

## What do we anticipate?

When we get into December, are we thrilled by the birth of Christ? Are we consumed by the joy of our salvation? Are we stunned with awe and adoration by the beginning of God's redemptive plan for us? If we want to be honest, many times we look forward more towards the celebratory, things like holiday, gift-exchange, or gathering, which are all good by nature. But if that's all that we're really looking forward to, then we miss entirely.

C.S Lewis once said, "we are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

Isn't that the imagery of our hearts' condition most of the time? It is so tragic that the world captures our heart so deep that the glory of Christ's birth just passed by like an annual festival. At this time, I think we need to remind ourselves that even the best holiday we had or the gift we wanted the most will not satisfy

the deepest of my heart. I am not created for that. Oh, how our hearts need to be awakened by the true and lasting joy rather than those superficial and fleeting pleasures.

## Preparing for the true and lasting joy

If you're like me, who is easily distracted or side-tracked by the non-fundamental things, then there is no better time to refocus our attention to the most precious one. There are many ways we can recalibrate our hearts to the first importance, the birth of the Saviour. Two things, I think, will help us.

First, read (again) the Gospel, be immersed in the person of Christ Jesus, and behold the meekness of the King of Glory born in a manger. Second, get an Advent devotional. A daily Advent devotional will slow our days in our fast-paced culture that prizes busyness. The art of meditating the Bible is clearly lost in our digitised age. We numb our spiritual tastebud by spending hours in front of the screen. For such reasons, the least I can do, is to get help from external resources to refresh my heart.

Of course, they are not prescriptive at all.

We can do a lot of other stuff, such as journaling, studying the Bible in a group, listening to sermons, reading good books, and many more. The point is that we long for our hearts to see and savour the glory of Christ in this season. And the evidence of our longing is our efforts to stir up our hearts. I believe God hears the longing of His people and He will satisfy those who seek Him wholeheartedly.

### **Come, let us adore Him**

One of the biggest mysteries of Christmas is that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords was born as a baby in a manger. His mission was to glorify the Father and save us, sinners. Jesus could've come as a King and rule over the earth. But he didn't. Instead, "... though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." (Philippians 2:6-8).

When we try to grasp the majesty of Christ shown in meekness, we will be utterly blown by His peculiar glory.

He is the radiance of God's glory. He upholds the universe by the word of His power. But He is also the same God that experiences thirst, fatigue, and trouble. He came to the world He created not to be treated as a king, but a man of sorrow. As Isaiah prophesied,

"But he was pierced for our transgressions;

he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,

and with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray;

we have turned—every one—to his own way;

and the Lord has laid on him

the iniquity of us all."

(Isaiah 53:5-6)

This season invites us once again to ponder about our salvation. How unscrutinised is God's wisdom, who would have comprehended? So, shall we make every effort to see and savour our Saviour? Or shall we settle on movies, holiday, and gifts? Prepare the season well, and we will experience the inexpressible joy that can only come from the Lord.



# WEEKLY DEVOTION

## 29 NOVEMBER

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Yehezkiel 34 - 37

Ayat Renungan:  
Yehezkiel 34 : 16

“Yang hilang akan Kucari, yang tersesat akan Kubawa pulang, yang luka akan Kubalut, yang sakit akan Kukuatkan, serta yang gemuk dan yang kuat akan Kulindungi; Aku akan mengembalikan mereka sebagaimana seharusnya.”

## 30 NOVEMBER

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Yehezkiel 38 - 41

Ayat Renungan:  
Yehezkiel 36 : 25

“Aku akan mencurahkan kepadamu air jernih, yang akan mentahirkan kamu; dari segala kenajisanmu dan dari semua berhalaberalamumu. Aku akan mentahirkan kamu.”

## 01 DECEMBER

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Yehezkiel 42 - 45

Ayat Renungan:  
Yehezkiel 36 : 26

“Kamu akan Kuberikan hati yang baru, dan roh yang baru di dalam batinmu dan Aku akan menjauhkan dari tubuhmu hati yang keras dan Kuberikan kepadamu hati yang taat.”

## 02 DECEMBER

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Yehezkiel 46 - 48

Ayat Renungan:  
Yehezkiel 36 : 27

“Roh-Ku akan Kuberikan diam di dalam batinmu dan Aku akan membuat kamu hidup menurut segala ketetapan-Ku dan tetap berpegang pada peraturan-peraturan-Ku dan melakukannya.”

## 03 DECEMBER

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Daniel 1 - 4

Ayat Renungan:  
Yehezkiel 36 : 29

“Aku akan melepaskan kamu dari segala dosa kenajisanmu dan Aku akan menumbuhkan gandum serta memperbanyaknya, dan Aku tidak lagi mendatangkan kelaparan atasmu.”

## 04 DECEMBER

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Daniel 5 - 8

Ayat Renungan:  
Daniel 9 : 9

“Pada Tuhan, Allah kami, ada kesayangan dan keampunan, walaupun kami telah memberontak terhadap Dia,”

## 05 DECEMBER

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Daniel 9 - 12

Ayat Renungan:  
Daniel 12 : 3

“Dan orang-orang bijaksana akan bercahaya seperti cahaya cakrawala, dan yang telah menuntun banyak orang kepada kebenaran seperti bintang-bintang, tetap untuk selamanya.”

# “To influence, or be Influenced?”

BY NATALIA WIJAYA

Since we married, I have noticed some positive influences my husband has brought to my life and characters. Let me share just one of them here.

My husband is one of the most simple-living men I've known. He only buys what he needs and doesn't like to accumulate things. I like to shop when there is a sale and think that “I have saved”, but in my husband's opinion, not to shop at all is the best option to save. He has taught me to think wisely and to draw a clearer line between “needs” and “wants”. I have learnt an invaluable lesson: “Just because I can, doesn't mean I have to buy it”. In doing so he is still a generous person and willing to share what he has with others in need.

At first this prudent lifestyle didn't come naturally for me. After all for more than twenty years I had been raised within a different family background where “saving money” wasn't really the most important life lesson, in fact, it was rarely discussed. My mother taught me to be independent since

I was little, but more towards having the ability to do things on my own like cooking, cleaning, and juggling priorities in life so I could serve my family well when “one day” I myself became a mother. Now that I am a mother of two, indeed I have found this very useful and I could easily adapt to living abroad without a helper just because I had been used to.

When I asked him in return in what way I have influenced him throughout our years of togetherness, his answer was my spirituality which has inspired and motivated him in seeking God amidst his busyness and exhausting working days.

I can see that the closer personally and physically others are to us, the greater our influence over them, and vice versa.

Remember when Jesus said in

**Matthew 5:13,**

*“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except*

*to be thrown out and trampled underfoot”.*

With the increasing growth in the digital era, it is more visible for us to reach out to others through the internet and social media even to those who are in the other parts of the world. Nonetheless, I believe the immediate people who can “taste our saltiness” are essentially those closest to us; our own spouse, children, siblings, parents, friends, house mates, work colleagues, even down to our neighbors.

Regardless of what ministries or “noble activities” I do outside of the four walls of my home, if my own husband and children don’t see myself growing to have Christ-like characters, then I need to examine closely the true state of my personal relationship with Christ.

Have I abided daily in Him?

Salt in itself is a very stable substance. It is unusual, almost impossible, for salt not to be salty. “If it is not salty, it is not salt”. Salt doesn’t need to force itself to be salty, it is simply its nature. Similarly, when one is truly attached to the True Vine (Jesus Himself), it will be inevitable for him/her not to bear any fruit!

“**We live either to influence others or be influenced, we simply cannot live and interact with others within a community and stay the same.**

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The fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) isn't something that we can force nor speed up the process.

We need to hold on to God's own promise in **John 15:5**,

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. **If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing**".*

We need to focus our heart and commit our time first and foremostly **to remain in Christ**.

Eventually it's not merely our knowledge about the Bible and Christian doctrine that define us as Christ's followers, but the fruits (influence) others get to taste.

Moreover, the most important people I want to bring a good influence to is, firstly, my own children.

I desire for them to grow knowing their true worth and value in Christ, one that is not defined by the social media or approvals from others. That they are daughters of Christ, redeemed by precious blood of Christ, created for God's good works, and to live differently (set apart) from this world.

And the best way to teach them is for myself living up to this truth. Many times, I am unaware that my children are copying what I said and did. Countless times I come in repentance because I am not being careful

with my words and actions. If you're also a parent, our everyday activities bring opportunity for learning and to influence our children whether to live for God, or for our own agenda, busy life, and pleasures. Our home is our children's first classroom.

Furthermore, 2 Corinthians 3:2-3 says that, "You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, **known and read by everyone**."

You show that **you are a letter from Christ**, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with **the Spirit of the living God**, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts".

Once again, let's draw close to Christ and remain in Him.

2 Corinthians 3:5

"Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but **our competence comes from God**."

When the world becomes too attractive, when we fail to love Him above all else as we should, when we are feeling unmotivated and hopeless in our journey following Jesus, remember there is only one thing, the best thing, we need to take part: **sitting at the feet of Jesus and listen to what He says** (Luke 10:39).

Luke 10:41-42

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things,

but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and **it will not be taken away from her.**”

We live either to influence others or be influenced, we simply cannot live and interact with others within a community and stay the same.

You may not get married and have children yet, but think of others who are within your influence (parents, siblings, relatives, friends, colleagues, housemates, neighbors). What message do you want them to read from your life? Does your life convey the message of Christ, or publication of worldly lifestyle, fame, and personal pleasures instead?

2 Corinthians 3:18

“And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

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***What message do you want them to read from your life?  
Does your life convey the message of Christ, or publication of worldly lifestyle, fame, and personal pleasures instead?***

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# MINISTRY LIST

## VOCAL



Jessica Sutiono

## MUSICIAN



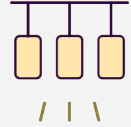
Raynaldo Ali

## MULTIMEDIA



Budi Sendjaja

## LIGHTING



Budi Sendjaja

## SOUND



Steven Santika

## USHER



Elbert Pranoto

## TRANSLATOR



Elbert Pranoto

## CARING



Felix Hariyadi

## DANCER



Priska Sunaryo

## DRAMA



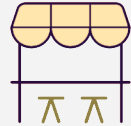
Jennifer Chandra

## SUNDAY SCHOOL



Reinetta Tanujaya

## HOSPITALITY



Tasmin Ifah

## INTERCESSOR



Monica Haryanto

## MISSION



Felix Chietra

## MEDIA ART



Sonia Pranatha

## COMMUNITY KITCHEN



Yolanda Tjong

## PODCAST



Ravello Satria

## YOUTH



Rio Susanto

*"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms"*

**We invite you to join our  
online service every Sunday  
from 8.30 am onwards**

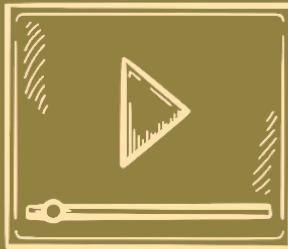
**You can access it through:**

**Website:**

**<https://www.bethanymelb.org.au>**

**Youtube:**

**Bethany International Church Melbourne**



**Let's celebrate the Lord's Day  
together!**